

First in the West



THE FIRST UTAH-MADE AUTOMOBILE
—The first automobile made in Utah was a gasoline powered vehicle built by Mr.

John Devey of Lehi. He is pictured with his daughter, Clara Devey S. Andersen, in the 1900 automobile—speed, 20 mph.

First Automobile Built in Utah Made by Utah-Idaho Sugar Engineer

(Submitted by Mrs. Clara Devey S. Andersen)

The first automobile ever made in Utah was constructed by John Devey, an engineer for the Utah-Idaho Sugar Factory, at Lehi in 1899 and 1900. Mr. Devey heard about the horseless carriage of the East and those owned by the Silver brothers, and decided to build one.

He made a special trip to Salt Lake to see the Locomobile owned by the Silver brothers and was given his first ride in the marvelous machine. Gaining a few pointers from his observation of the operation of this vehicle, Mr. Devey constructed the first automobile in Utah, and probably the first in the entire

West. He was assisted by his sons, J. Frank and Walter A. Devey.

The car was a one cylinder, chain drive, gasoline engine. A handle steering device was used and low rubber-tire buggy wheels were brought from the East. George Kirkham, a carpenter at the sugar factory, made the fancy trimming and body for the seat.

The hood over the engine was made of quarter-inch mesh wire screen. A belt was first used from the engine to the counter-shaft which were turned by chains. Later Mr. Devey put a clutch on the engine and did away with this belt drive. On good roads a speed of 20 miles per hour could be attained.

The home-made automobile served Mr. Devey for eleven years. The car, which weighed only 750 pounds, was finally given to his grandchildren.

Among the prominent men of Utah who had their first ride in a horseless carriage through the courtesy of Mr. Devey were T. R. Cutler, George and Mark Austin, James H. Gardner, M. W. Ingalls and members of the Kirkham and Goates families.

Mr. Devey explained to his children that the reason for the large wheels was to keep from getting stuck in irrigation ditches which farmers persisted in digging across the early highways.

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